

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053



August 27, 2015

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Suite 383
Los Angeles, California 90012

**RE: California Register of Historical Resources Nomination of
Sullivan Canyon Historic District**

Dear Board of Supervisors:

The above-named resource is being nominated to the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The State Historical Resources Commission (Commission) is scheduled to take action on this nomination at its next regular quarterly meeting. (Details regarding the meeting are enclosed.) At the meeting any interested party, government entity, or member of the public may address the Commission regarding the nomination prior to the Commission taking action on the nomination. Any interested party, government entity, or member of the public may also submit to the Commission written comments regarding the nomination. Comments should be submitted to California State Parks, Attn: Office of Historic Preservation, Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer, 1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, California 95816-7100. So that the Commission may have adequate time to consider such comments, it is requested, but not required, that such comments be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer 15 days before the meeting.

The California Register is an authoritative guide to the state's significant historical and archeological resources. Generally, there are no restrictions placed upon a private property owner with regard to normal use, maintenance or sale of a resource listed in the California Register. Resources listed in of eligible for listing in the California Register must be given consideration in the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") review process and protected from substantial adverse change, to the extent prudent and feasible. Further information is available in Technical Assistance Series #1 "California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Historical Resources," published by Office of Historic Preservation and available by mail or online at www.ohp.parks.ca.gov.

If you have questions, please contact the Registration Unit at (916) 445-7004.

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105

September 20, 2015

San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors
San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors
200 North Tenth Street, Suite 300
San Joaquin, California 95373

Re: California Department of Water Resources
San Joaquin County Department of Water Resources

Dear Board of Supervisors:

The following information is being provided to you for your information. The California Department of Water Resources (CDWR) is a state agency that is responsible for the management of the state's water resources. CDWR is currently conducting a study of the state's water resources and is seeking input from the public. CDWR is currently conducting a study of the state's water resources and is seeking input from the public. CDWR is currently conducting a study of the state's water resources and is seeking input from the public.

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I am, therefore, enclosing a copy of the

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

2015 SEP -1 AM 11:20

FILED

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053
calshpo@parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



MEETING NOTICE

FOR: State Historical Resources Commission Quarterly Meeting

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2015

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Historic City Hall
Historic Hearing Room
915 I Street, 2nd Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

This room is accessible to people with disabilities. Questions regarding the meeting should be directed to the Registration Unit (916) 445-7008.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #

Binomial
RHP Status Code 3CS

Other
Review

DRAFT

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 21

*Resource Name or #: Sullivan Canyon

P1. Other Identifier: Sullivan Canyon Ranches

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*a. County: Los Angeles County

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: Topanga and Beverly Hills Date: 2012 T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ of Sec ; M.D. B.M.

c. Address:

City: Los Angeles

Zip: 90049

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Sullivan Canyon is a Cliff May development of single family houses located along Old Ranch Road north of Sunset Boulevard, in the Brentwood area of Los Angeles. Tucked beneath two ridges, the setting of Sullivan Canyon is dominated by the sloping hills that give the appearance of being an uncultivated landscape. Species of trees unify Sullivan Canyon from a distance and the distinct shape and coloring of oak and sycamore trees follow Old Ranch Road. The uncleared shrubbery that spreads up both sides of the canyon sets the tone for the landscape that emphasizes a wild look. The setting of Sullivan Canyon also reflects a pervasive horse culture critical to ranch living in the city, giving the overall look and feel of a working ranch more than a housing development.

Contributing resources are single family houses constructed in a Ranch style and open urban space or ancillary buildings dedicated to housing and training horses. Houses are one story in height and have low pitched roofs that extend over rambling wings that include covered garages and carports. A variety of cladding materials is applied to the exterior, including brick as well as board and batten siding. Roofing material is most often hand-split wooden shakes. Non-contributing resources are single family houses that do not retain sufficient integrity to convey the Ranch style or were constructed outside of the period of significance.

Sullivan Canyon contains 32 district contributing properties. There are 34 contributing buildings (22 single family houses; 11 ancillary structures, including horse stables, guest houses, and garages; and 1 gate), 8 open urban spaces, and 1 road. There are 23 non contributing properties (22 non contributing single family houses, and 1 non contributing open urban space).

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (HP2) Single family properties, (HP31) Open urban spaces, (HP4) Ancillary buildings, (HP46) Gate, Road (HP37)

*P4. Resources Present: ☐ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☒ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

View S of N Old Ranch Road
January 31, 2013

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources: ☒ Historic

☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1941-1962, assessor

*P7. Owner and Address:

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

Jenna Snow and Justin Greving
Chattel, Inc.

13417 Ventura Blvd.

Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

*P9. Date Recorded: May, 2013

*P10. Survey Type: Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: none

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☒ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

DPR 523A (1/95)

*Required information

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
DISTRICT RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 2 of 21

*NRHP Status Code: 3CS

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Sullivan Canyon

D1. Historic Name: Sullivan Canyon Ranches

D2. Common Name: Sullivan Canyon

*D3. Detailed Description:

See continuation sheet

*D4. Boundary Description:

See continuation sheet

*D5. Boundary Justification:

See continuation sheet

*D6. Significance: Theme: Postwar Ranch style single family housing

Period of Significance: 1941-1962

Applicable Criteria: 3

Area: Los Angeles, California

See continuation sheet

*D7. References:

See continuation sheet

*D8. Evaluator: Jenna Snow and Justin Greving, Chattel, Inc.

Date: July, 2013

Affiliation and Address: Historic Preservation Consultants, 13417 Ventura Blvd. Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D3. Detailed Description (continued)

The atmosphere of Sullivan Canyon is dominated by the distinct look and feel of a canyon climate. Tucked far beneath two ridges, Sullivan Canyon is dominated by the natural setting of sloping hills that give the appearance of being an uncultivated landscape. From above, Sullivan Canyon does not appear so much a housing development, but a rustic, rural, and undeveloped landscape. However, species of trees were carefully selected by Cliff May, developer and designer, to unify Sullivan Canyon from a distance, and the distinct shape and coloring of mature oak and sycamore trees can be seen following the winding trail of Old Ranch Road. The canopy created by these mature trees creates a unique light in the canyon, partially filtering out the harsh Southern California sun before it reaches the ground. The uncleared shrubbery that spreads up both sides of the canyon sets the tone for the landscape that emphasizes a wild look.

Although Old Ranch Road is located just off Sunset Boulevard in the Brentwood area of Los Angeles, separation from the city is tangible as one leaves the main road. The enclosed atmosphere of the canyon eliminates all noise from nearby vehicular traffic, leaving only the sounds and smells of nature — the occasional neigh of a horse or song of a bird. The canyon microclimate creates a cooler temperature that reinforces a palpable sense of uniqueness as one enters Sullivan Canyon. The deep recess of the canyon places it out of sight from surrounding housing developments located near Sunset Boulevard, creating an environment that appears singular in nature and far removed from the surrounding city.

The setting of Sullivan Canyon also reflects the pervasive horse culture so critical to ranch living in the city. Whereas other developments in the Ranch style reflect a desire to emulate design features of a ranch, few developments actually accommodate real horses. A communal stable is located at the base of Sullivan Canyon near Sunset Boulevard, and individual stables are located in front of most properties, giving the overall look and feel of a working ranch more than a typical suburban housing development. Ancillary structures related to the housing, feeding, and maintenance of horses provide a common visual language throughout the entire development. Further details such as the uncurbed roadway, hand-split post and rail fences, and wood speed limit signs give a rural character to Old Ranch Road itself.

For the most part, the Deed Covenants & Restrictions put in place by Cliff May on tracts in Sullivan Canyon have ensured its continued integrity from a spatial and architectural perspective. Aside from six parcels of open urban space that are either dedicated communal stables or undeveloped land along Old Ranch Road, contributing resources are single family houses, barns and gates constructed in the Ranch style, or "California Ranch style," in Cliff May's terms. Houses are one story in height and have low pitched roofs that extend over rambling wings that include covered garages and carports. Detailed descriptions of character defining features of contributing resources are provided in the statement of significance, and descriptions of each resource are provided in separate 523a forms for each contributing resource.

Descriptions on 523a forms

523a forms were prepared for each contributing resource. In the architectural description, types of construction, siding, rooflines, fenestration, and other architectural features, were detailed with a note on their specific type as well as location. If various types of siding, fenestrations or rooflines were visible, they were also noted. For example, 1800 N Melhill Way has multiple types of siding; wood board and batten and smooth stucco siding were noted on all visible elevations, and rock veneer was noted on the northwest elevation. These details were recorded as: **Siding/Sheathing:** wood, board/batten, all visible, **Siding/Sheathing:** stucco, smooth, all visible, **Siding/Sheathing:** rock veneer, NW. 1800 N Melhill Way has a side gable roof with a medium pitch and wide eaves and was recorded as: **Roof:** side gable, medium, wide eaves. If details were noted on the primary elevation of the house they were listed as "front," while all other elevations were listed by their cardinal orientation.

There are 32 district contributing properties that have a status code of 3CD. There is a total of 34 contributing buildings, including 22 single family houses (HP2); 11 ancillary structures, including horse stables, guest houses, and garages (HP4); and 1 gate (HP46). 8 contributing properties contain open urban space (HP31), with no contributing buildings. The road, itself of Old Ranch Road and Melhill Way (HP37) also contributes to the historic district.

The following page contains a table of contributing resources:

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 4 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

■ Continuation □ Update

D3. Detailed Description (continued)

Address	APN	Status Code	Type	Contributing buildings	Description
(none, on N Old Ranch Rd)	4432012003	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
(none, on Old Ranch Rd)	4425023002	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space, horse stable is not a contributor
13141 W Sunset Bl (1600 Old Ranch Rd)	4425023006	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1650 N Old Ranch Rd	4425024029	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1728 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012014	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1730 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012013	6LD	HP2, HP4	2	single family house, outhouse
1734 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012012	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1736 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012016	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1737 N Old Ranch Rd	4425023013	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1739 N Old Ranch Rd	4425023014	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1740 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012008	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1741 N Old Ranch Rd	4425023003	3CD	HP2, HP4	2	single family house, guest house
1755 N Old Ranch Rd	4432007025	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1761 N Old Ranch Rd	4432007013	3CD	HP31	0	open urban space
1767 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008014	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1771 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008015	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1781 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008016	3CD	HP2, HP4	2	single family house and horse stable
1784 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011011	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1790 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011010	3CD	HP2, HP4	2	single family house and garage
1800 N Melhill Wy	4432011037	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1809 N Melhill Wy	4432011046	3CD	HP2, HP4	4	single family house and horse stables
1810 N Melhill Wy	4432011039	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1805 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008019 4432008057	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1808 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011022	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1813 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009009	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1818 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011023	3CD	HP2, HP4	2	single family house and horse stables
1824 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011024	3CD	HP2, HP4	4	single family house and horse stables
1827 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009013	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1831 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009015	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
1835 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009014	3CD	HP2	1	single family house
2200 N Old Ranch Rd	4432006066	3CD	HP46	1	gate
Old Ranch Road and Melhill Way		3CD	HP37	0	road

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 5 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D3. Detailed Description (continued)

There are 23 district non-contributing properties that have a status code of 6LD. 22 parcels contain single family properties (HP2), and one property contains open urban space (HP31). The following is a list of district non-contributing properties:

Address	APN	Status Code	Type
1751 N Old Ranch Rd	4432007024	6LD	HP2
1759 N Old Ranch Rd	4432007026	6LD	HP2
1760 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012007	6LD	HP2
1763 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008013	6LD	HP2
1768 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012005	6LD	HP2
1776 N Old Ranch Rd	4432012019	6LD	HP2
1778 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011034	6LD	HP2
1780 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011012	6LD	HP2
1787 N Old Ranch Rd	4432008017	6LD	HP2
1795 N Old Ranch Rd (1801)	4432008018	6LD	HP2
1800 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011021	6LD	HP2
1805 N Melhill Wy	4432011045	6LD	HP2
1808 N Melhill Wy	4432011040	6LD	HP2
1812 1/2 N Melhill Wy	4432011006	6LD	HP2
1821 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009010	6LD	HP2
1823 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009018	6LD	HP2
1825 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009019	6LD	HP2
1830 N Old Ranch Rd	4432011020	6LD	HP2
1834 N Old Ranch Rd	4432010024	6LD	HP31
1840 N Old Ranch Rd	4432009016	6LD	HP2
1900 N Old Ranch Rd	4432010009	6LD	HP2
2000 N Old Ranch Rd	4432010008	6LD	HP2
2002 N Old Ranch Rd	4432010007	6LD	HP2

D4. Boundary Description

Sullivan Canyon consists of properties located along Old Ranch Road. Due to the linear nature of this development, the district follows the path of Old Ranch Road and includes exclusively properties along this road and the tiny cul-de-sac of Melhill Way located off of Old Ranch Road. Contributing resources are located on parcels of land that extend up to the top of the canyon, thus the district includes the entire topography of the canyon up to the ridge line of the adjoining canyons, with Rustic Canyon to the west, and Mandeville Canyon to the east. The canyon atmosphere, including its natural landscape, ancillary features related to the care and training of horses, and distinct topography, creates a very strong sense of time and place that is restricted to the natural boundaries of the canyon.

D.5 Boundary Justification

The boundary of Sullivan Canyon is restricted to properties located along Old Ranch Road north of Sunset Boulevard. Cliff May parceled out the majority of the land contained in two tracts running along Old Ranch Road in Sullivan Canyon during the 1940s. With the establishment of deed restrictions in Sullivan Canyon, development was under Cliff May's strict control, ensuring a unified look and feel for not just the single family houses, but also the surrounding landscape and ancillary structures. The topography of the canyon creates a strong natural boundary for Sullivan Canyon, and surrounding properties in neighboring canyons that were not under Cliff May's control are not visible from within the recesses of the canyon.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

Sullivan Canyon is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3 for its architecture as one of the most unique examples of an intact postwar Ranch style single family housing tract designed by Cliff May, one of the most important originators and designers of the Ranch style. Cliff May's contribution was not just to the creation of the Ranch style house, but also to its proliferation across the United States as the most popular suburban house form. Although Cliff May constructed thousands of houses throughout California and the western United States, Sullivan Canyon is where Cliff May was allowed to bring the Ranch style to its most literal expression by incorporating communal stables, bridle trails, and horse barns in a rustic setting that reflected an actual ranch.

Sullivan Canyon is the culmination of Cliff May's lifelong dedication to designing, developing, and promoting an urbanized form of ranch living. As one of, if not the most, important designers of the Ranch style, May dictated what "modern" suburban American living looked like to countless households across the United States. With Sullivan Canyon, Cliff May maintained control of the area's overall aesthetic long after his role as a developer had ended. The natural topography of the canyon contributes to the character of development, while strict rules about placement and types of planting give a rustic feel to its setting. With most properties in the canyon accommodating real horses, Cliff May's vision goes beyond the aesthetic of ranch living to be an actual equestrian lifestyle. Finally, houses in the Ranch style, with their low sloping roofs and carefully chosen materials, complete the exceptional character of this small development tucked away in the Santa Monica Mountains. Sullivan Canyon provides a strong sense of time and place as Cliff May's intact vision for perfect ranch living in the city.

Cliff May

Cliff May (1908-1989) is arguably the most influential designer of single-family homes in the Ranch style. A sixth generation Californian from San Diego, he had no formal architectural education and began his design career building furniture. With his father-in-law in real estate, Cliff May designed and constructed, complete with furniture, his first speculative house in San Diego in 1934. A 1934 advertisement proclaims: "Cliff May Miracle Haciendas Restore the Romance and Charm of Early California Design to Modern Living."¹ Cliff May was influenced by historic architectural forms and styles and credited Bertram Goodhue's work at the Panama Pacific Exhibition of 1915 as an important influence.² What early California design should look like in a modern form was a question that preoccupied Cliff May throughout his career. May understood a home and a neighborhood to be evolving organisms; it is interesting to note that "during the 1940s and 1950s Cliff [May] often encouraged clients to develop a master plan to allow for new additions and changing uses as budgets allowed."³

Cliff May established a relationship with banker John A. Smith while designing a house for Smith's mother in La Habra. In 1937, Cliff May moved with his family to Los Angeles, setting up a partnership with John Smith. He built a home for himself and his family on Mandeville Road, off of Sunset Boulevard in Brentwood, very close to Sullivan Canyon. Over his career, he designed and built five houses for himself and his family in the neighborhood of Brentwood north of Sunset Boulevard, three of which were located in Sullivan Canyon. He frequently entertained clients at home; each home became an advertisement for his work.

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

¹ Daniel P. Gregory, *Cliff May and the Modern Ranch House* (New York: Rizzoli, 2008), 31. Along with David Bricker's dissertation, these two works are the most comprehensive on Cliff May. While Daniel Gregory focuses on custom homes, David Bricker concentrates on speculative tract homes.

² Gregory, 31.

By commemorating the opening of the Panama Canal a year earlier, the exposition served to boost San Diego as the closest American port to the canal. The Exposition, with Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue as chief architect, was a "statement of local industry clothed in a Southern California architecture" (Paul Gleye, *The Architecture of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Rosebud Books, 1981) 87) and had as much influence on subsequent use of Spanish Colonial Revival style as the Chicago Columbian Exposition did for historic revival styles in general and Classical Revival style in particular. Use of the Spanish Colonial Revival style at the Panama-California Exposition represented Spanish historical antecedents more faithfully than the Mission Revival style and "emphasize[d] the richness of Spanish precedents found throughout Latin America" (Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998) 418).

³ Gregory, 45.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 7 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

In 1939, Robert C. Gillis and his daughter Adelaide Gillis McCormick sold the 32-acre McCormick Ranch to John Smith and Cliff May.⁴ John Smith and Cliff May subdivided the land, developing "Riviera Ranch" in the late 1930s through early 1940s. Located off of Old Ranch Road, immediately north of Sunset Boulevard, the subdivision reflects its rural character with unevenly paved curved roads and cul-de-sacs lined with large live oak and sycamore trees, hand-split post and rail fences, and lush foliage. At the time, Cliff May stated that his intention for Riviera Ranch "to dedicate the property to the preservation of the Early California architecture of this period."⁵ Daniel Gregory, former Senior Editor of *Sunset* and a Cliff May scholar and author of the monograph *Cliff May and the Modern Ranch House*, describes Riviera Ranch as "a sort of Olduvai Gorge of ranch-house history,"⁶ ground zero for a housing development that exclusively used Ranch style. Riviera Ranch was located at the base of Sullivan Canyon and was developed on land that was relatively flat, allowing for a more typical arrangement of houses around cul-de-sacs stemming off a main road. Although Cliff May initially envisioned twelve large estates for Riviera Ranch, he eventually settled for a more profitable development of 36 homes.⁷ Today Riviera Ranch still maintains a real ranch lifestyle as evidenced by the proliferation of functioning stables in front of most properties; however, the tighter spacing and gridded layout of homes creates a suburban feel for Riviera Ranch, as opposed to the more deliberately rustic and unique linear layout of the Sullivan Canyon district.

While Cliff May and John Smith developed custom houses in exclusive neighborhoods such as Riviera Ranch and Sullivan Ranch, Cliff May is also significant for his speculative, low-cost housing developments, what he called "Built for Sale." He used his speculative housing developments to work out ideas for his custom homes, such as in the experimental Skylight House he designed with Chris Choate in 1949.⁸ Chris Choate and Cliff May designed a "low cost ranch house" that used a system of prefabricated components that could be assembled easily on site.⁹ Cliff May and Chris Choate's plans were used for more than 18,000 tract Ranch style houses in developments as geographically diverse as the Ranchos in Long Beach, California and Harvey Park in Denver, Colorado. He single-handedly popularized the Ranch style and was the inspiration for numerous developers and architects, who loosely reinterpreted Cliff May's ideas and forms in their own tract housing.¹⁰ Among those he influenced were Joseph Eichler, a developer who has been gaining in renown in recent years, and the less well known developer William Mellenthin, who created many tracts in the San Fernando Valley. Cliff May's obituary in the *Los Angeles Times* stated, "the simple, affordable homes...now dot more landscape than most architectural firms achieve in several lifetimes."¹¹

Cliff May was widely published in his time in magazines such as *Sunset*, *House Beautiful*, *House & Garden*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *Architectural Digest*. He had a close relationship with the editorial board of *Sunset*, designing their Menlo Park office and annex in 1951 and 1966, respectively, and was often featured in the pages of the magazine. One of the first Cliff May houses constructed in San Diego appeared in *Sunset* in 1936. The description said, "Cliff May captures the past in structures that please the present. He wants the country places of Southern California to wear the careless aristocratic air of the old ranchos."¹² In collaboration with the editors of *Sunset*, Cliff May wrote a contemporary pattern book entitled *Western Ranch House*, which was published in 1946. Cliff May also had a close relationship with the editor of *House Beautiful*, with the April 1946 issue dedicated to him. Articles written contemporaneously with Cliff May's designs recognized his incorporation of older buildings in his work, as well as creation of new elements that evoke historic building forms and materials.

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

⁴ "Title to McCormick Ranch Transferred for \$96,000," *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1939, E2.

⁵ "Title to McCormick Ranch Transferred for \$96,000," *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1939, E2.

⁶ Gregory, 26.

Olduvai Gorge is one of the most important prehistoric sites in the world and has been instrumental in furthering understanding of early human evolution.

⁷ Gregory, 107.

⁸ Gregory, 94.

⁹ Gregory, 128.

¹⁰ David Bricker, "Ranch Houses are not all the Same," *Preservation of the Recent Past 2*, edited by Deborah Slaton and William G. Foulks, (Washington, DC: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, National Park Service, and Association for Preservation Technology International, 2000).

¹¹ Burt A. Folkart, "Cliff May; Home Designer Perfected the Ranch Style," *Los Angeles Times*, October 20, 1989.

¹² Gregory, 23.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

■ Continuation □ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

In 1956, Cliff May constructed Mandalay, his fifth and last personal residence, at the end of Old Ranch Road towards the top of Sullivan Canyon. At over 7,000 square feet, it was significantly larger than his other houses, with large expanses of open living areas pushing the very limits of the Ranch style. When Cliff May attempted to publish plans for the house, the editor of *House Beautiful* refused to advertise to the average homeowner a single family house of this size.¹³ This initial setback did not deter Cliff May from publicizing his grandest personal residence, and Mandalay was featured not only in a 16-page feature article of *House & Garden*, but also a book published by *Sunset* dedicated to the houses of Cliff May.¹⁴ Although Mandalay has since been demolished, the monumental gateway to the house is extant and remains a testament to Cliff May's final personal residence constructed in the Ranch style on an epic scale.

Sullivan Canyon History

Around 1946, Cliff May began subdividing parcels off of Old Ranch Road, then known as Sullivan Canyon, for a new development to be called Sullivan Canyon Ranches. Even more than Riviera Ranch, this development has a rural character enhanced by large live oak and sycamore trees, hand-split post and rail fences, and lush foliage lining the street. By developing the land in a linear manner along Old Ranch Road, Cliff May created a housing development that stood out from the typical grid of other postwar housing developments, further enhancing its unique rural character. Several buildings, including 1900 Old Ranch Road, 2000 Old Ranch Road, and the "old adobe" (address unknown, but located close to 1900 and 2000 Old Ranch Road) already existed in 1946. As part of the larger development, Cliff May adapted and added to them as he subdivided lots along Old Ranch Road.

Promotional materials for Sullivan Canyon Ranches largely followed the example of Riviera Ranch in advertising the exclusivity of "ranch living in the city." An early map showing the first subdivisions along Old Ranch Road detailed four elements that made the "Sullivan Canyon Ranches" ideal for this unique city lifestyle. "Dedicated community bridle trails" ensured that ranch living meant accommodation of real horses on "choice level tree-covered lots" that included "beautiful oaks and sycamores." "Sensible restrictions" also helped ensure the development maintained its character in the coming years.

The "sensible restrictions" placed on Sullivan Canyon by Cliff May placed legal restrictions on development and use of the subdivided lots in Sullivan Canyon. The "Declaration of Establishment of Conditions and Restrictions" (known as DC & Rs), drafted by Cliff and Jean Lichty May established not only architectural guidelines on development of Sullivan Canyon but social and spatial restrictions as well.¹⁵

Social Restrictions

The first restriction detailed that no portion of the tracts in Sullivan Canyon could be used or occupied by, "any person whose blood is not entirely that of the White or Caucasian race, except servants or employees rendering services upon the premise which they occupy."¹⁶ Although the Supreme Court decisions of *Shelley v. Kramer* (1948), and *Barrows v. Jackson* (1953) legally banned racial covenants in the United States, social pressure against integration effectively maintained segregation of most communities in Los Angeles after World War II.¹⁷

¹³ Gregory, 166.

¹⁴ Gregory, 172-173.

¹⁵ The DC & Rs were renewed in 1989 with an amendment that no longer enforced use of wood shakes as a roofing material due to it being outlawed by the City of Los Angeles. This renewal extended enforcement of the DC & Rs until 2014.

¹⁶ Cliff and Jean Lichty May, "Declaration of Establishment of Conditions and Restrictions (Tract 14490)," 1951, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California. A similar document containing almost the exact same language exists for Tract 16203. All references to DC & Rs refer to these two documents unless otherwise noted.

¹⁷ Josh Sides, "Straight into Compton: American Dreams, Urban Nightmares, and the Metamorphosis of a Black Suburb," *American Quarterly*, vol. 56, no 3 (Sept., 2004), 586.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

In the wake of increasing migration of African Americans to Southern California during the 1940s and 1950s, neighborhoods surrounding the historic African American core of South Los Angeles and Watts became hostile to the change in demographics that forced residents to interact with people that were not white.¹⁸ As African Americans filtered into Los Angeles, they faced extreme opposition to moving anywhere except for the areas deemed Black friendly. Cities such as Watts were not necessarily exclusively Black communities, but more importantly, the surrounding areas, including working class neighborhoods such as Compton and the more wealthy neighborhoods such as Santa Monica and Brentwood, were exclusively white. While Sullivan Canyon was geographically removed from the center of the integration issue in Los Angeles, incorporation of a racial covenant within the DC & Rs reflected the general attitude against integration in Los Angeles in the 1950s. Despite being illegal, racial restrictions were upheld by many wealthy enclaves in southern California up until the 1970s.¹⁹

Spatial Restrictions

While the rest of Los Angeles was experiencing an extreme housing crisis as World War II veterans remained in Southern California, Sullivan Canyon can be seen as a direct counterpoint to the hasty subdivision and development of areas such as the San Fernando Valley. With the population of Southern California nearly tripling in size from 1930 to 1960, builders constructed new homes at a rapid pace to provide affordable housing stock to newcomers.²⁰ As pressure led to an increased development of cheaply constructed single family houses and apartment buildings, Sullivan Canyon reflected the elite's ability to successfully live within the city all the while maintaining a comfortable and spacious rural lifestyle.

An early map, likely dating to the 1950s, details the general outline of Sullivan Canyon, following the winding trail of Old Ranch Road, with a limited number of parcels spaced in smaller sections on both sides of the road, leaving portions of land undeveloped between these linear micro developments. A later map indicates some undeveloped portions along the road were later subdivided while still maintaining the generous lot sizes and continuing a strict linear development following Old Ranch Road. Lots extended from the road up to the ridgeline of the canyon thus ensuring development followed the organic look of the canyon and not the rigid grid of a typical subdivision.

While the placement and size of lots contributed to the general look and feel of Sullivan Canyon, the DC & Rs ensured the development retained its rustic character. In addition to restricting construction to one single family house per lot, the DC & Rs also stipulated that no trees or shrubs over three inches in diameter were to be cut, no hillside brush was to be removed, and nothing except native California trees, shrubs, and plants were to be planted between the house and the main road.²¹

The DC & Rs also placed a limit on the type of ranch living that could take place in Sullivan Canyon. Horses (limited to 4), and dogs (limited to 3) were the only farm animals permitted on these mini ranches; cows, hogs, goats, sheep, and poultry were strictly forbidden.²² Wagons, auto and horse trailers had to be housed in suitable structures and temporary residences were not to be erected on the lots. The restrictions contained within the DC & Rs ensured Sullivan Canyon presented a manicured vision of ranch living carefully crafted to include the picturesque while eliminating the unsightly.

Architectural Restrictions

Architectural restrictions, also included in the DC & Rs, were the last element in maintaining a carefully crafted vision for perfect urban ranch life. While decisions about lot size and landscape restrictions were crucial to maintaining an overall feel for Sullivan Canyon, the houses themselves were the final detail that ensured residents not only projected the image of a ranch lifestyle from the street, but were also able to live that lifestyle behind closed doors.

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

¹⁸ Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 44.

¹⁹ Mike Davis, *City of Quartz* (New York: Verso, 2006), 214.

²⁰ Eric John Abrahamson, "One after another: Building homes and making loans," in *Carefree California: Cliff May and the Romance of the Ranch House*, ed. Jocelyn Gibbs and Nicholas Olsberg (Santa Barbara: Art, Design & Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2012), 193.

²¹ Cliff and Jean Litchy May, DC & Rs.

²² Cliff and Jean Litchy May, DC & Rs.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

The DC & Rs stipulated general shaping of the houses as well as their layout and materials. Residences on any lot were to have no less than 1,500 square feet of living space including covered porches. All residences in Sullivan Canyon were to be of the "California Ranch House type, or of such similar architectural design as to harmonize with the California Ranch House type in outward appearance."²³ While this terminology may seem somewhat vague, Cliff May further clarified specific details that made the "California Ranch House type." Residences were to be one story in height. Roofs were to be pitched no more than five feet and no less than two feet in a twelve-foot run, and all garages were to be incorporated within the roofline of the house. Acceptable roofing material included hand-split wooden shakes or shingle tiles; asphalt shingles were prohibited. Television and radio antennas extending above the roof were not allowed and all exterior lighting between the house and road was to be indirect. Fences between the road and house had to be hand-split post and rail, with rails no less than ten feet in length. Furthermore, all specifications and building details had to be approved by Cliff May in writing before construction could begin.

Development in Sullivan Canyon

After Cliff May parceled out the lots in Sullivan Canyon, construction of houses began soon thereafter. In 1950 Cliff May divided 18 lots from tract 16203, and by 1953 all but three had been improved, with the remaining three lots being developed later in 1955, 1959, and 1962. Tract 14490, containing portions on the north side of Old Ranch Road, was parceled into 13 lots in 1951. While this side was slower to develop, the majority of houses were constructed between 1952 and 1957. Development of these two tracts comprised the majority of houses built in Sullivan Canyon. Establishment of the DC & Rs for these two tracts ensured that most of Sullivan Canyon maintains a unified look and feel. Aside from the four larger estates located at the northern portion of Sullivan Canyon, and five parcels located midway up Old Ranch Road, tracts 16203 and 14490 presented a somewhat continuous linear development stretching along the canyon north of Riviera Ranch.

When purchasing a lot in Sullivan Canyon, future homeowners had two options with regard to the design of their house. They could either build a Cliff May-designed home by hiring him directly, or they could submit their plans for his written approval. Custom homes designed by Cliff May are common throughout the canyon and comprise half of the contributing properties in the district as evidenced in building permits that list Cliff May's company, Ranch House Sales, as the contractor for the house, or by original drawings bearing his name for specific lots in Sullivan Canyon. After selling off his house in Riviera Ranch, Cliff May and his family moved to Sullivan Canyon, living in a number of homes that Cliff May designed as advertisements for Sullivan Ranches lifestyle. In addition to Cliff May's personal homes, a number of show homes were built in Sullivan Canyon that received extensive press. Both the Pricsetter House (located at 1776 N Old Ranch Road) and the Stylesetter House (located at 1755 N Old Ranch Road), later incarnations of the famously successful Pace Setter House (located in Riviera Ranch), were constructed in Sullivan Canyon.

Cliff May closely scrutinized the plans of homes he did not design to ensure their compliance with the DC & Rs. Sometimes correspondence with future homeowners was formal and relatively brief, as in the case with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lesnett, who received a letter from Cliff May dated March 6, 1956 that stated simply, "The drawings which you have submitted for Lot B13, Tract 14490, are hereby approved."²⁴ For the most part, residents complied with Cliff May's architectural restrictions and could begin construction soon after submitting their plans for his approval.

However, Cliff May's close scrutiny of plans for their accordance with the DC & Rs sometimes led to a drawn out process of approvals involving extensive correspondence between him and the property owner. As early as 1956, Mr. and Mrs. DeGraeve phoned Cliff May about the possibility of him designing for them a house on lots 10 and 11 of tract 16203, located far up Old Ranch Road.²⁵ While the DeGraeves eventually chose Kenneth R. Swift to design their house, Cliff May still had the final say and required Swift to submit not only house plans for his approval, but also plot and landscape plans as well. Cliff May rejected the first plot plan for the home and required the house be sited on a different location to give sufficient space to the surrounding homes.²⁶ He was also not happy with Swift's original design of the house as it sat too high above the grade of the property and included a basement, characteristics that went against the "California Ranch House type" required by the DC & Rs.

²³ Cliff and Jean Litchy May, DC & Rs.

²⁴ Letter from Cliff May to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lesnett dated March 6, 1956, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

²⁵ Memo to Cliff May regarding phone call from Emil DeGraeve, dated September 21, 1956, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

²⁶ Letter from Kenneth R. Swift to Cliff May dated March 6, 1958, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

Even after he approved a modified plan for the house, Cliff May monitored the construction for any inconsistencies between the approved plans and the constructed house. Soon after the DeGraeves moved in, Cliff May explained in a threatening letter that, "the window pane cutup are not in accordance with the drawings that you have submitted, and therefore the job is in violation of the architectural restrictions."²⁷ At this point it would appear the DeGraeves had enough of Cliff May's interjections about the "Victorian" and "ginger bread ish" qualities of their windows. In a somewhat firmly penned letter, Emil DeGraeve explained to Cliff May that he and his wife "have consistently be[en] solicitous of your personal opinions with respect to our house and ground and (we appreciate your interest); moreover we intend to be as cooperative as we can; but we consider that the owner of real estate has overriding rights in controlling the aesthetic features of his land and improvements... certainly, our front door detail, as it stands, should be offensive to no one."²⁸ While there was no further correspondence regarding the front door, this exchange reveals Cliff May's own close scrutiny of the canyon for consistency with his regulations.

The extensive correspondence regarding the houses in Sullivan Canyon indicates Cliff May's heavy hand in controlling the appearance of all properties, not just the ones that were affiliated with his name. Cliff May's DC & Rs were only as good as the person fighting to ensure they were upheld so as to maintain visual consistency in the canyon. Furthermore, Cliff May enlisted the help of his neighbors to ensure the canyon would retain its integrity in years to come. A.T. Gilman, himself a practicing architect as well as a resident of Sullivan Canyon, would advise May on whether or not to approve plans for houses in Sullivan Canyon. With regard to the proposed house located at 1813 N Old Ranch Road, Gilman, in a handwritten note conceded to May, "Generally I'd suggest a letter of approval provided the final design conforms to ¶ 12 on roof pitch. Can't see anything else in these restrictions that you can hold him on. -Hap. This is no gem but fortunately few people will see it."²⁹

Sullivan Canyon Property Owners Association

Although Cliff May set out strict guidelines for lots in Sullivan Canyon, upholding the high standards of the DC & Rs became the joint responsibility between him and the Sullivan Canyon Property Owners Association once all the lots in tracts 14490 and 16203 had been sold off. In 1964, Sullivan Canyon residents voted on an Architectural Committee composed of A. T. Gilman, Robert Lesnett, Clifford Moles, and Cliff May to maintain and enforce restrictions on development.³⁰ Correspondence between residents of Sullivan Canyon and Cliff May indicate the Committee often had a hard time convincing some residents to comply with the guidelines. In a threatening letter to all property owners within tracts 14490 and 16203, A. T. Gilman, Chairman of the Architectural Committee, wrote, "you are no doubt aware that the existence of one or more violations of deed restrictions can result in such restrictions becoming unenforceable. Should this happen in our canyon community it is the opinion of your Architectural Committees [sic] that serious loss of property values would occur, and every property-owner in the tracts and in the canyon as a whole would suffer."³¹

Despite resistance of certain residents to the powers of the Architectural Committee, Cliff May continued to fight for his vision as subsequent additions or alterations were made to houses in Sullivan Canyon. In a letter to the property owners of 1800 Old Ranch Road regarding an addition in 1988, May urged the use of "Cliff May White" on the residence so as to blend it within the natural shrubbery of the hillside.³² May went further to state, "I hope someday all of the Canyon houses will adopt this color."

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

²⁷ Letter from Cliff May to Mr. and Mrs. Emil DeGraeve dated June 7, 1960, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

²⁸ Letter from Emil DeGraeve to Cliff May dated June 21, 1960, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

²⁹ Note from A.T. Gilman to Cliff May regarding 1813 Old Ranch Rd, undated, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

³⁰ Letter from Cliff May to Ralph Waycott dated December 21, 1964, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

³¹ Memorandum to owners of property in tracts 14490 and 16203 from A. T. Gilman, dated April 5, 1965, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

³² Letter from Cliff May to Dr. and Mrs. Robert N. Braun, dated February 5, 1988, Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

■ Continuation □ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

Ranch Style

The Ranch style of the mid-twentieth century developed from a nineteenth century prototype of functional buildings from California's Spanish history. Characteristic features are an asymmetrical, rambling plan with rooms arranged linearly. Ranch style houses have a low profile and are typically only one story. The linear plan emphasizes a flow between interior and exterior spaces and private outdoor spaces. Other characteristic elements of Ranch style houses, alluding to country living in the city, include rustic details such as board and batten siding, shake roofs, diamond-patterned window muntins, dovecotes over the garage, open beams and trusses on the interior, and unpainted brick kitchen walls. Typically, the car was incorporated into the design through an attached garage and/or carport and/or motor court. *Sunset* also influenced mass consumption of an "informal" lifestyle designed around Ranch style houses. Alan Hess, a leading writer on the form, explains that "the Ranch [style] House was more about a way of living properly in the mid-twentieth century...constructed for the mass market by the emerging home-building industry after World War II."³³

Character Defining Features

Cliff May's houses generally and specifically in Sullivan Canyon have been described as a "high-style" version of the postwar Ranch style house. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program has issued guidelines for surveying and identifying suburban housing tracts and identifies character defining features of the Ranch style house, the most popular suburban postwar architectural form. The following architectural features of houses in Sullivan Canyon can also be found in other postwar Ranch style tract developments, although often to a lesser extent and on a less grand scale.³⁴

Character defining features of Cliff May-designed Ranch style house:

- Single-story building featuring: wings, carports integrated within the building envelope, medium to low-pitched roofs, large picture windows framing public areas of the house (i.e., living room), deeply inset entrances and bays, wide or prominent chimneys, exposed structural beams.
- Variety of siding materials applied to the exterior, including brick and board and batten siding.
- Use of "Cliff May White."
- Roof material of hand-split wooden shakes or shingle tiles.

The unique setting of Sullivan Canyon sets it above and beyond other typical postwar tract developments. Character defining features of the setting include:

- Natural landscape that features mostly local plants and unmanicured brush on the hillside. Mature oak and sycamore trees planted along Old Ranch Road.
- Uncurbed roadway, lack of sidewalks.
- Ancillary structures and spaces integral to the care, feeding, and housing of horses, often in front yard.
- Hardscaping that reflects the ranch lifestyle, hand-split post and rail fencing along Old Ranch Road, wood speed limit signs.
- Linear nature of development that follows the trail of Old Ranch Road.

Integrity

Overall, Sullivan Canyon retains physical characteristics from an earlier period and reflects a strong sense of time and place from its period of significance, 1941-1962. Losses of integrity to the design and materials of some contributing properties mean Sullivan Canyon does not retain sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register. However, as a whole Sullivan Canyon retains sufficient integrity for listing in the California Register due to the fact that the district retains its setting, atmosphere, and association with Cliff May, despite the lack of design integrity of some contributing properties. Because California Register regulations do not provide substantial written guidance on evaluating integrity, the National Register bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, is used.

Location

Sullivan Canyon retains integrity of location, as houses constructed in the canyon have not been relocated off site.

³³ Alan Hess, *The Ranch House*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc, 2004), 12.

³⁴ Character defining features were determined by a preliminary survey of Sullivan Canyon, research in the Cliff May archives at UCSB, combined with the findings of *Report 723: A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, 102-103.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 13 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

Design

Generally Sullivan Canyon retains integrity of design and Cliff May's vision for the Ranch style is visible in the contributing properties. Rambling one story single family houses with integrated carports and low-sloping roofs reflect Cliff May's desire to create a rural design aesthetic within an urban setting. Furthermore, the ancillary structures dedicated to the care and feeding of horses are not just visual features but are still used to serve horses maintained on properties in the canyon.

Setting

Sullivan Canyon retains integrity of setting due to its secluded nature that separates it physically and visually from the surrounding developments and urban environment. The unkempt nature of the canyon walls, covered in native Californian plants, combined with the use of hand-split post and rail fences throughout the canyon, create a distinct and cohesive setting that reflects the period of significance.

Materials

Materials of contributing properties are largely intact and reflect Cliff May's desire to emulate a rural setting. Rustic building materials, such as board and batten siding, brick details, and hand-split shake roofs, reflect the Ranch style popularized by Cliff May.

Workmanship

The workmanship of contributing resources in Sullivan Canyon reflects the rustic origins of the Ranch style and the traditional building practices found within rural settings. The rough and irregular details of hand-split shake roofs and post and rail fences harkens back to a period when fences and roofing materials had to be hewn out of available resources using unsophisticated machinery. Board and batten siding is an imitation of early rural vernacular building traditions that Cliff May used to further reinforce the rural aesthetic of his buildings.

Feeling

The atmosphere of Sullivan Canyon creates a feeling that contributes to a strong sense of time and place. Although it is located off of Sunset Boulevard, Sullivan Canyon's distinct climate creates an important barrier that not only blocks traffic noise, but also allows the sounds and smells of nature to echo throughout the canyon. The unique canyon microclimate combined with the lush vegetation and canopy of mature oak and sycamore trees creates a lower temperature than the surrounding areas. These tactile and auditory aspects contribute to the intangible character of Sullivan Canyon that remains unchanged since it was developed.

Association

Sullivan Canyon is still a community of single family houses in a residential area that reflects Cliff May's vision for ranch living in the city. The intact setting, location, and feeling of the canyon create a strong sense of time and place that contribute to Cliff May's desire to imitate aspects and features of a rural lifestyle in an urban setting. Although some resources have been altered, they do not detract from the overall character of Sullivan Canyon which maintains a strong association with Cliff May and the Ranch style.

Integrity of contributing properties

While the integrity of the setting, feeling, and association is critical to the general character of Sullivan Canyon, design and materials associated with the Ranch style house are also character defining; contributing resources to the district retain sufficient integrity to convey this style. The house located at 1755 N Old Ranch Road is a case in point. It is Y-shaped in plan and features a garage incorporated within the low sloping roofline of the house. These character defining features of the Ranch style indicate the contributing resource retains design integrity. A wide brick chimney features prominently on the primary elevation of the house, which is covered in a variety of siding materials including painted brick and board and batten. Although the house may have been reroofed, the replacement material is compatible with the shape, color, and grain of hand-split wooden shakes or shingles. The retention of specific building materials such as brick and board and batten indicate the house also retains integrity of materials and workmanship. With a lush landscape of trees and bushes located up the hillside at the rear of the property, and a wide driveway and large front yard, the house retains integrity of location and setting. The climate of the surrounding canyon aids in maintaining integrity of feeling and atmosphere for the house. When taken as a whole, the house maintains integrity of association with Cliff May and the Ranch style.

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

District non-contributing properties are not in the Ranch style, have been altered so as to no longer communicate this style from the exterior, or were constructed outside of the period of significance. Significant alterations include additions to original buildings that are not in keeping with the character of the Ranch style and replacement of original materials including siding, roof materials, doors and windows, with incompatible materials. For example, the house located at 1825 N Old Ranch Road has been altered so as to no longer convey the Ranch style and is a non-contributing property in the district. Although some materials and design features remain, such as the board and batten siding and low sloping roof, alterations such as the metal addition to the brick chimney, incompatible replacement of original windows, and installation of a contemporary gate and driveway, detract from original character of the house. However, it should also be noted that from afar, the original landscape features surrounding the house remain intact. Mature trees and the unkempt shrubbery that are prevalent in the canyon partially mask the house from the street, ensuring that the incompatible design and materials of this one property do not detract from the larger setting of Sullivan Canyon. Despite the fact that some contributing buildings and structures do not retain integrity of design and materials, the unique landscape features of Sullivan Canyon contribute to create a cohesive and un-interrupted district throughout the canyon.

The following is a list of non-contributors along with a brief description as to why they do not contribute to the character of Sullivan Canyon:

1751 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically alterations include an altered façade and altered floor plan. In addition, original driveway and windows have been removed or replaced. ³⁵
1759 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, alterations include an altered façade. In addition, original siding, landscape and driveway have been removed or replaced.
1760 N Old Ranch Rd	Property was constructed in 1974, outside of the period of significance. ³⁶
1763 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, alterations include an altered façade. In addition, original windows, entrances, chimney, and siding materials have been removed or replaced.
1768 N Old Ranch Rd	Although the property is in Sullivan Canyon Cliff May did not approve of the final plans for this house. During his lifetime Cliff May tried to get the Sullivan Canyon Homeowners Association to mask the house from Old Ranch Road by planting trees and other shrubs in front of the house.
1776 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, alterations include an altered façade. In addition, the original floor plan has been altered
1778 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, alterations include an altered façade. In addition, original roof, windows, entrances and siding materials have been removed or replaced.
1780 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, the original roof, windows, and siding have been removed or replaced.
1787 N Old Ranch Rd	Property was constructed in 1977, outside of the period of significance.
1795 N Old Ranch Rd (1801)	Property was constructed in 2000, outside of the period of significance.

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

³⁵ Although these alterations took place outside the period of significance, they were performed by Cliff May and may take on significance over time.

³⁶ Although this house was constructed outside of the period of significance it is designed in the Ranch style by Peter Choate, the son of Cliff May's business partner, Peter Choate, and plans were reviewed and approved by Cliff May. For more information about this house, see the period of significance section on p. 16 of the Continuation Sheet.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 15 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

1800 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, alterations include removal or replacement of original windows. Entryway materials, including fence and driveway, have been replaced with incompatible materials.
1805 N Melhill Wy	Insufficient information available on property. May become eligible with additional information.
1808 N Melhill Wy	Property was constructed in 2007, outside of the period of significance.
1812 1/2 N Melhill Wy	Property was constructed, or significantly altered circa 2000, outside of the period of significance.
1821 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, original roof and siding materials have been removed or replaced. In addition, the house has an altered floor plan.
1823 N Old Ranch Rd	Property was constructed in 1981, outside of the period of significance.
1825 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, original windows and chimney materials have been removed or replaced. In addition, driveway and gate have been altered.
1830 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, original windows, entrances, and siding materials have been removed or replaced. In addition, the house has an altered floor plan.
1834 N Old Ranch Rd	Open urban space is connected to adjacent parcel outside of the district.
1840 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, original windows, entrances, roof, and siding materials have been removed or replaced. In addition, the house has an altered floor plan.
1900 N Old Ranch Rd	Building on property has been demolished.
2000 N Old Ranch Rd	Insufficient information available on property. May become eligible with additional information.
2002 N Old Ranch Rd	Due to alterations, this property no longer possesses sufficient historic integrity to contribute to the historic district. Specifically, a vegetative roof completely alters the building's appearance. In addition, original siding has been replaced and the house has an altered floor plan.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 16 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

*Recorded by: Chattel, Inc.

*Date: July, 2013

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

D6. Significance (continued)

Period of Significance

The period of significance spans from 1941-1962 and reflects the time frame when contributing resources were built in the canyon. Of the 29 contributing resources, 28 were constructed in the post-World War II period from 1948-1962. The property constructed at 13141 W Sunset Boulevard by Cliff May for the Appletons was built in 1941 and is located at the base of Sullivan Canyon just north of Riviera Ranch. An early map of Sullivan Canyon indicates this house may have also served for a short period as Cliff May's office. Furthermore, it is located on a lot that contains a significant portion of Old Ranch Road that extends from Sunset Boulevard up to where the communal riding arena is located at the base of the canyon. Due to its visual prominence at the base of Sullivan Canyon, it is included as a district contributing property and the period of significance extends to include this house.

There is one property constructed in 1974 located at 1760 N Old Ranch Road that, although it is outside of the period of significance, should be reevaluated for inclusion as a contributor as it approaches 50 years of age. This property was designed by Peter Choate, the son of May's design and business partner Chris Choate.³⁷ Peter Choate himself became a well regarded architect in his own right and designed homes for a number of celebrity clients in Los Angeles.³⁸ Despite its young age, the house was constructed in the Ranch style and contributes to the character of Sullivan Canyon.³⁹ It may be appropriate to reevaluate this property for significance under Criterion 3 at a later date and extend the period of significance to 1974. Other properties should also be reevaluated as they become 50 years of age as some houses were remodeled by Cliff May to remain compatible with the character of Sullivan Canyon.

Conclusion

Sullivan Canyon is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under criterion 3 for its architecture as one of the most unique examples of an intact postwar Ranch style single family housing tract developed and designed by Cliff May. While other suburban housing divisions designed by Cliff May might be considered more influential as prototypical layouts for postwar suburban housing tracts, Sullivan Canyon stands out as a unique manifestation of the Ranch style taken to its most literal extreme. Cliff May is often referred to as the father of the Ranch style, and his direct and continued supervision of Sullivan Canyon throughout his lifetime ensured it met his strict vision for Ranch living in the city. With the equestrian lifestyle physically built into the environment, from a communal riding arena at the base of the canyon, and bridle trails along Old Ranch Road, to the proliferation of horse stables in front of most properties, Sullivan Canyon was where Ranch style and ranch life were one in the same. The exceptional character of Sullivan Canyon is brought on not only through the Ranch style architecture of the houses and the equestrian accommodations, but is further enhanced by the deliberately rustic character of the development, with mature oak and sycamore trees lining Old Ranch Road, and natural brush running up the canyon walls. Although Cliff May designed numerous tracts throughout California and the western United States, and popularized the Ranch style through various forms of media, he lived and worked in Sullivan Canyon to the end of his life. It is in Sullivan Canyon that he was able to exercise his overarching vision for ideal city living that dictated more than just a house style, but a lifestyle as well.

DPR 523L (1/95)

*Required information

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*Date: July, 2013

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D7. References

³⁷ Although the building permit for 1760 Old Ranch Road lists Chris Choate as the architect/builder and his son, Peter Choate, as the original owner and contractor, design of the house was solely the work of the son Peter. Plans were reviewed and approved by Cliff May (conversation with Patti Choate, Peter Choate's wife, July 21, 2014).

³⁸ Fred Bernstein, "Be It Ever So Unhumble, Architect Peter Choate Builds High-Cost Housing for the Stars," *PEOPLE Magazine*, Vol. 12 no. 11, September 10, 1979. Choate Associates, the architecture firm founded by Chris Choate was eventually taken over by Peter and is still in the family. The firm is now run by Peter's daughter, Courtney Choate Moritz, who is also an architect (conversation with Patti Choate, Peter Choate's wife, July 21, 2014).

³⁹ Cliff May reviewed and approved the plans submitted by Peter Choate for the house. The house is located very close to the street and a large retaining wall had to be constructed due to the steep incline of the lot that runs up Sullivan Canyon. Cliff May's only change to the design of this house was to increase the setback from Old Ranch Road by five feet (conversation with Patti Choate, Peter Choate's wife, July 21, 2014).

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 17 of 21

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Sullivan Canyon

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The following resources are located in the Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara, California:

Letter from Cliff May to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lesnett dated March 6, 1956.

Letter from Kenneth R. Swift to Cliff May dated March 6, 1958.

Letter from Cliff May to Mr. and Mrs. Emil DeGraeve dated June 7, 1960.

Letter from Cliff May to Ralph Waycott dated December 21, 1964.

Letter from Cliff May to Dr. and Mrs. Robert N. Braun, dated February 5, 1988.

May, Cliff and Jean Litchy, "Declaration of Establishment of Conditions and Restrictions (Tract 14490)," 1951.

Memo to Cliff May regarding phone call from Emil DeGraeve, dated September 21, 1956.

Memorandum to owners of property in tracts 14490 and 16203 from A. T. Gilman, dated April 5, 1965.

Note from A.T. Gilman to Cliff May regarding 1813 Old Ranch Rd, undated.

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Sullivan Canyon, Old Ranch Road, view north (Chattel, February 28, 2013).



Sullivan Canyon, Old Ranch Road, view south (Chattel, February 1, 2013)